

(Draft - Awaiting Formal Approval)
MINUTES OF THE
HEALTH SYSTEM REFORM TASK FORCE
Wednesday, November 17, 2010 – 8:00 a.m. – Room 250 State Capitol

Members Present:

Speaker David Clark, House Chair
Sen. Wayne L. Niederhauser, Senate Chair
Sen. Gene Davis
Sen. Peter C. Knudson
Rep. Jackie Biskupski
Rep. Bradley M. Daw
Rep. Bradley G. Last
Rep. David Litvack
Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove
Rep. Merlynn T. Newbold

Members Absent:

Sen. D. Chris Butters

Staff Present:

Mr. Mark D. Andrews, Policy Analyst
Ms. Catherine J. Dupont, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Task Force Business

Chair Niederhauser called the meeting to order at 8:26 a.m. When Speaker Clark arrived, he assumed chairing the meeting.

MOTION: Speaker Clark moved to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2010 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Davis was absent for the vote.

2. Utah Health Exchange Update

Mr. Matt Spencer, Office of Consumer Health Services, reported that 80 small employer groups seeking health insurance coverage through the Utah Health Exchange beginning January 1 are either in the underwriting phase of enrollment or have completed underwriting and are at the point of reviewing plan rates and choosing a default plan.

Ms. Tanji Northrup, Division Director, Utah Insurance Department, and member of the Utah Defined Contribution Risk Adjuster Board, indicated that the board is working to help open enrollment in the Exchange move forward as smoothly as possible.

3. Workgroup Reports and Related Issues

Rep. Dunnigan reported on the efforts of the Implementation Oversight Workgroup. He reviewed the Workgroup's goal of streamlining and making the Utah Health Exchange more user friendly. He discussed how the enrollment timeline could be shortened by eliminating the submission by employers of an employee "census" or list of employees with particular information. He also reviewed 2011 General Session draft legislation, "Health Reform Amendments" (2011FL-0319/009), which addresses various issues considered by the Workgroup. He indicated that the bill was not ready for action by the Task Force. He noted two additional issues that could potentially be addressed by the bill: 1) coverage of dental care, eye care, and spiritual healing; and 2) whether the responsibility to notify an insured of the opportunity to purchase a conversion policy when COBRA coverage is about to expire should be shifted from the employer to the carrier.

Ms. Northrup helped respond to questions from the Task Force and explained how she believes the Utah Insurance Department can address responses by health insurers to the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that have made it difficult for certain people with children to get health insurance coverage.

MOTION: Speaker Clark moved that the Task Force approve 2011 General Session draft legislation, "Health Reform Amendments" (2011FL-0319/009), in concept, as presented by the sponsor. The motion passed unanimously.

Rep. Dunnigan indicated that he is going to add to the bill a provision to clarify that if an employer fails to pay a premium, the employer's employees retain coverage during the 30-day premium payment grace period. This will standardize what most insurers are already doing.

Rep. Daw reported on the Cost Containment Workgroup's study of high deductible health plan/health saving account combinations and presented 2011 General Session draft legislation, "Health Reform - Cost Containment" (2011FL-0172/003). Rep. Daw and Mr. Jeff Jensen, Director, Public Employees Health Program, responded to questions about the draft legislation.

MOTION: Rep. Daw moved that the Task Force pass 2011 General Session draft legislation, "Health Reform - Cost Containment" (2011FL-0172/003), as a committee bill. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Davis absent for the vote.

4. Draft Legislation

Discussed under Item 3.

5. Other Business

The chairs thanked all who have been involved in the work of the Task Force this interim.

Noting recent attention given to the Utah Health Exchange by news media and others, Speaker Clark indicated that the Task Force has created a Utah franchise for health reform that can be used across the country.

6. Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Biskupski moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Clark adjourned the meeting at 9:26 a.m.